

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A composition comprising:
a first pigment component comprising particulate ground calcium carbonate (GCC) having a particle size distribution (psd) steepness factor ranging from about 30 to about 45; and
a second pigment component comprising ~~either~~ particulate precipitated calcium carbonate (PCC) having a psd steepness factor ranging from about 55 to about 75 and a d_{50} not greater than $0.5\mu\text{m}$, ~~or particulate GCC having a psd steepness factor between about 40 and about 55.~~
2. (Currently Amended) A composition according to claim 1, wherein the first and second component particles are present in ~~the particulate pigment~~ an amount such that in a the weight ratio of the first component particles to the second component particles ranges~~[[ing]]~~ from about 5:95 to about 95:5 ~~first:second component~~.
3. (Currently Amended) A composition according to claim ~~[[1]]~~2, wherein the ~~first and second component particles are present in the particulate pigment in a weight ratio of the first component particles to the second component particles ranges~~[[ing]] from about 10:90 to about 90:10 ~~first:second component~~.

4. (Currently Amended) A composition according to claim ~~[[1]]~~3, wherein the ~~first and second component particles are present in the particulate pigment in a weight ratio of the first component particles to the second component particles ranges~~[[ing]] from about 30:70 to about 70:30 ~~first:second component~~.

5. (Currently Amended) A composition according to ~~any one of the preceding claim~~[[s]] 1, further comprising a kaolin clay.

6. (Currently Amended) A composition according to claim 5, wherein said kaolin clay is present in an amount such that the ~~with said first and second calcium carbonate pigments in a weight ratio of the first and second calcium carbonate pigments to the kaolin clay is~~ at least about 10:90 ~~calcium carbonate:kaolin clay~~.

7. (Currently Amended) A composition according to claim ~~[[5]]~~6, wherein ~~said kaolin clay is present with said first and second calcium carbonate pigments in a~~ the weight ratio ranges from~~[[of]]~~ about 70:30 ~~calcium carbonate:kaolin clay~~.

8. (Currently Amended) A composition according to ~~any one of the preceding claim~~[[s]] 1, wherein said composition is a pigment ~~present as~~ in the form of a dry particulate mixture.

9. (Currently Amended) A composition according to ~~any one of claim~~[[s]] 1-~~to~~ 7, wherein said composition is a pigment ~~present as~~ in the form of a suspension of said particles in a liquid medium.

10. (Currently Amended) A composition according to ~~any one of the~~ ~~preceding claim~~[[s]] 1, wherein said composition is a pigment for [used on] paper and other substrates.

11. (Currently Amended) A composition according to ~~any one of the~~ ~~preceding claim~~[[s]] 1, wherein the second pigment component comprises PCC having a d_{50} of less than $0.5\mu\text{m}$.

12. (Currently Amended) A composition according to ~~any one of claim~~[[s]] 1-~~to~~ 10, wherein the second pigment component comprises PCC having a d_{50} less than $0.45\mu\text{m}$.

13. (Currently Amended) A composition according to ~~any one of claim~~[[s]] 1-~~to~~ 10, wherein the second pigment component comprises PCC having a d_{50} of less than $0.40\mu\text{m}$.

14. (Currently Amended) A composition according to ~~any one of claim~~[[s]] 1-~~to~~ 10, wherein the second pigment component comprises PCC having a d_{50} of less than $0.35\mu\text{m}$.

15. (Currently Amended) A composition according to ~~any one of claim~~[[s]] 1 to 10, wherein the second pigment component comprises PCC having a d_{50} of $0.2\mu\text{m}$ - $0.5\mu\text{m}$.

16. (Currently Amended) A composition according to ~~any one of claim~~[[s]] 1 to 10, wherein the second pigment component comprises PCC having a d_{50} ranging from ~~[[of]]~~ $0.3\mu\text{m}$ ~~[[-]]~~to $0.5\mu\text{m}$.

17. (Currently Amended) A composition according to ~~any one of claim~~[[s]] 1 to 10, wherein the second pigment component comprises PCC having a d_{50} of about $0.4\mu\text{m}$.

18. (Currently Amended) A composition according to ~~any one of the preceding claim~~[[s]] 1, wherein the composition consists essentially of the first pigment component and the second pigment component; the first pigment component consists essentially of the GCC and the second pigment component consists essentially of the PCC ~~or the GCC~~.

19. (Currently Amended) A coating composition comprising an aqueous suspension of at least one particulate pigment and at least one binder, wherein the particulate pigment comprises a mixture of:

a first pigment component comprising particulate GCC having a psd steepness factor ranging from about 30 to about 45; and

a second pigment component comprising particulate PCC having a psd steepness factor ranging from about 55 to about 75 and a d_{50} not greater than $0.5\mu\text{m}$ -~~or-
particulate GCC having a psd steepness factor ranging from about 40 to about 55.~~

20. (Currently Amended) A coating composition according to claim 19, wherein the pigment is ~~a pigment according to claim 10~~ for paper and other substrates.

21. (Currently Amended) A coating composition according to claim 19 ~~or 20~~, wherein the at least one binder comprises ~~is present in an amount ranging from about~~ 4% to about 30% of the solids of the composition on a dry weight basis.

22. (Currently Amended) A coating composition according to ~~any one of~~ claim[[s]] 19 ~~to 21~~, wherein the at least one binder comprises a modified starch.

23. (Currently Amended) A coating composition according to ~~any one of~~ claim[[s]] 19 ~~to 21~~, wherein the at least one binder comprises an unmodified starch.

24. (Currently Amended) A coating composition according to claim 22 ~~or 23~~, wherein the at least one binder comprises a component other than starch.

25. (Currently Amended) A coating composition according to ~~any one of~~ claim[[s]] 19 ~~to~~ 24, further comprising: one or more cross linkers; one or more water retention aids; one or more viscosity modifiers and/or thickeners; one or more lubricity/calendering aids; one or more dispersants; one or more antifoamers/defoamers; one or more dry or wet pick improvement additives; one or more dry or wet rub improvement and/or abrasion resistance additives; one or more gloss-Ink hold-out additives; one or more optical brightening agents (OBA) and/or fluorescent whitening agents (FWA); one or more dyes; one or more biocides/spoilage control agents; one or more ~~levelling~~ leveling and evening aids; one or more grease and oil resistance additives; one or more water resistance additives; one or more additional pigments; or any combination thereof.

26. (Currently Amended) A coating composition according to ~~any one of~~ claim[[s]] 19 ~~to~~ 25, further comprising an optional component in an amount of less than about 10% by weight, relative to the total weight of the composition ~~of other components~~.

27. (Currently Amended) A coating composition according to ~~any one of~~ claim[[s]] 19 ~~to~~ 26, wherein the second pigment component comprises PCC having a d_{50} of less than $0.5\mu\text{m}$.

28. (Currently Amended) A coating composition according to ~~any one of~~ claim 19-~~to~~-26, wherein the second pigment component comprises PCC having a d_{50} of less than $0.45\mu\text{m}$.

29. (Currently Amended) A coating composition according to ~~any one of~~ claim[[s]] 19-~~to~~-26, wherein the second pigment component comprises PCC having a d_{50} of less than $0.40\mu\text{m}$.

30. (Currently Amended) A coating composition according to ~~any one of~~ claim[[s]] 19-~~to~~-26, wherein the second pigment component comprises PCC having a d_{50} of less than $0.35\mu\text{m}$.

31. (Currently Amended) A coating composition according to ~~any one of~~ claim[[s]] 19-~~to~~-26, wherein the second pigment component comprises PCC having a d_{50} ranging from ~~of~~ $0.2\mu\text{m}$ ~~[[-]]~~ to $0.5\mu\text{m}$.

32. (Currently Amended) A coating composition according to ~~any one of~~ claim[[s]] 19-~~to~~-26, wherein the second pigment component comprises PCC having a d_{50} ranging from ~~of~~ $0.3\mu\text{m}$ ~~[[-]]~~ to $0.5\mu\text{m}$.

33. (Currently Amended) A coating composition according to ~~any one of~~ claim[[s]] 19-~~to~~-26, wherein the second pigment component comprises PCC having a d_{50} of about $0.4\mu\text{m}$.

34. (Currently Amended) A coating composition according to ~~any one of~~ claim[[s]] 19 ~~to 33~~, wherein the coating composition consists essentially of the aqueous suspension of the at least one particulate pigment and the at least one binder, and wherein the at least one particulate pigment consists essentially of the mixture of the first pigment component and the second pigment component and wherein the first pigment component consists essentially of the particulate GCC, and the second pigment component consists essentially of the particulate PCC ~~or the particulate GCC~~.

35. (Currently Amended) A method for preparing a coating composition ~~according to any one of claims 19 to 34, which comprising~~[[es]] mixing at least said one particulate pigment comprising a mixture of:

a first pigment component comprising particulate GCC having a psd steepness factor ranging from about 30 to about 45; and

a second pigment component comprising particulate PCC having a psd steepness factor ranging from about 55 to about 75 and a d_{50} not greater than $0.5\mu\text{m}$;

[[,]] and said at least one binder into an aqueous liquid medium ~~for~~ and then preparing ~~ation of~~ a suspension of the solid components therein.

36. (Currently Amended) A method for preparing a coated product, ~~which~~ compris[[es]]ing applying to said product a composition comprising an aqueous suspension of at least one particulate pigment and at least one binder, wherein the particulate pigment comprises a mixture of:

a first pigment component comprising particulate GCC having a psd steepness factor ranging from about 30 to about 45; and

a second pigment component comprising particulate PCC having a psd steepness factor ranging from about 55 to about 75 and a d_{50} not greater than $0.5\mu\text{m}$;

~~according to any one of claims 19 to 34, to coat said product, and further comprising calendering said product to form a coating thereon.~~

37. (Original) A method according to claim 36, wherein said product is in the form of paper, board, card, or paper board.

38. (Currently Amended) A product coated with a coating comprising a dry residue of ~~the~~ a composition comprising an aqueous suspension of at least one particulate pigment and at least one binder, wherein the particulate pigment comprises a mixture of:

a first pigment component comprising particulate GCC having a psd steepness factor ranging from about 30 to about 45; and

a second pigment component comprising particulate PCC having a psd steepness factor ranging from about 55 to about 75 and a d_{50} not greater than $0.5\mu\text{m}$ as
~~claimed in any one of claims 19 to 34.~~

39. (Original) A product according to claim 38, wherein said product is in the form of paper, board, card, or paper board.

40. (New) A composition according to claim 5, wherein said kaolin clay has a d_{50} of greater than or equal to about 0.5 μm .

41. (New) A composition according to claim 5, wherein said kaolin clay has a d_{50} less than about 0.5 μm .

42. (New) A composition according to claim 40, wherein said kaolin clay has a d_{50} ranging from about 0.5 μm to about 1.5 μm .

43. (New) A composition according to claim 41, wherein said kaolin clay has a d_{50} ranging from about 0.1 μm to about 0.5 μm .

44. (New) A composition according to claim 5, wherein said kaolin clay has a shape factor greater than about 25.

45. (New) A composition according to claim 5, wherein said kaolin clay has a shape factor greater than about 30.

46. (New) A composition according to claim 5, wherein said kaolin clay has a shape factor greater than about 45.

47. (New) A composition according to claim 5, wherein said kaolin clay has a shape factor less than about 25.

48. (New) A composition according to claim 5, wherein said kaolin clay has a shape factor ranging from about 5 to about 20.

49. (New) A composition according to claim 5, wherein said kaolin clay has a shape factor less than about 25 and a d_{50} less than about 0.5 μm .

50. (New) A composition according to claim 5, wherein said kaolin clay has a steepness greater than about 20.

51. (New) A composition according to claim 5, wherein said kaolin clay has a steepness ranging from about 25 to about 45.

52. (New) A coating composition according to claim 23, wherein the at least one binder comprises a component other than starch.

53. (New) A coating composition according to claim 25, further comprising an optional component in an amount of less than about 10% by weight, relative to the total weight of the composition.